

## **HOUSE PASSES HERSETH SANDLIN INITIATIVE TO STUDY MODERNIZATION OF B-1 BOMBERS, NEED FOR NEXT-GENERATION BOMBER**

*Herseth Sandlin supports amendment to cut \$485 in spending deemed unnecessary by military leaders*

**Washington, DC, May 27, 2010**—Today, Rep. Herseth Sandlin announced that the House passed her bipartisan amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011 (NDAA), legislation which authorizes funding for all military programs. Rep. Herseth Sandlin's amendment, co-sponsored by Rep. John Fleming (R-LA), requires a study of sustaining and modernizing the entire bomber fleet, including the B-1, and the need for a next-generation bomber. The House passed the NDAA, including Rep. Herseth Sandlin's amendment, by a vote of 229 to 186.

"Given the timetable for developing new long-range strike capability, such as the next-generation bomber, we must continue to invest in our present weapon platforms like the B-1, which has proven itself time and time again in recent years" said Rep. Herseth Sandlin. "It is likely that these planes will continue to serve as our nation's workhorse bomber for many years into the future. But we must also look ahead, plan smartly, and get the most bang for the buck— and that's why I'm requesting this study."

Specifically, Rep. Herseth Sandlin's amendment requires the DOD to use the Institute of Defense Analyses to do a comprehensive report on the U.S. bomber fleet and how it will be affected by the eventual deployment of a new long-range strike capability. The reports will include the sustainment and modernization needs of the B-1, B-2 and B-52 fleets, their forecasted service-life and what challenges the Air Force will confront over that service life, as well as what is the best way to meet our nation's national defense needs with regards to long-range strike – a suite of systems or a stand-alone bomber.

"There is no doubt that the B-1 and the next-generation bomber are critical to our national defense for the foreseeable future – and I'll continue to keep working to ensure that Ellsworth Air Force Base remains host to the B-1 and future missions as well," Rep. Herseth Sandlin said.

The underlying NDAA legislation includes \$485 million in funds unrequested by the Administration for an alternate engine for the F-35. The Pentagon estimates that \$2.9 billion dollars over the next five years will be required to complete research and development on this engine. Military leadership strongly opposes the inclusion of this funding, which will likely lead the President to veto the bill. Secretary Gates recently stated in a letter, "I firmly believe that the interests of the taxpayers, our military and the Joint Strike Fighter Program are best served by not pursuing an extra engine."

Rep. Herseth Sandlin supported an amendment to strike out the \$485 million for the alternate engine program for the F-35 fighter. However, the House failed to pass this amendment by a vote of 193 to 231. Rep. Herseth Sandlin added, "I supported this amendment because our nation's military leaders have firmly stated that the alternate engine program is not needed. Not only would we save \$485 million now, we save nearly \$3 billion in the long run by eliminating a program that the Department of Defense says is wasteful. This was a prime opportunity to

unnecessary government spending, and I'm disappointed the amendment failed."

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